To the Reverend and Merry Answerer
of *VOX CLERI.*

To be left at Mr. *Brabazon Aylmer*'s at the
Three Pigeons in

Cornhill.

With a Bundle.

[1690]

To the Reverend and Merry Antiquary
of NOX CLERI.

To be left at Mr. Bradshaw Palmer's at the
Three Pigeons in

Cornhill.

With a Bundle.

51-12°e

SIR,

WITH all due Reſpect to your City-Dignity, I make bold to acquaint you, that laſt Market-day I bought your Book, and have ſince *read it without prejudice*; and am glad to find that a Man of your ſide, though he makes no Abatements in his Wit, uſes ſo great *Moderation* and *Temper* in his Arguments. I am willing to think I have done what you never did; for I have really conſider'd your Book, which had you done who live within the Air of the Court, and muſt needs be infected with good breeding, you had doubtleſs retrenched divers Paſſages, that are full enough of Wit, (*you'll* ſay) but not quite ſo full of good Manners. In ſhort, Sir, had you conſider'd, you had never printed; and however at other times *the Burthen of Writing may have lain upon your Shoulders*, you would for once have conſider'd upon whoſe Shoulders the *Burthen of Reading* was to lie. For my own part I deſign to do this, and ſhall therefore draw up what I have to ſay, in as little compaſs as I can; for, as p. 35.

Horace ſays upon the like Occaſion, ſhould I too long interrupt your Care of your thirty thouſand, how could I anſwer it to the Pariſh?

To begin therefore, I agree with you, that Indifferent Things are in their own nature alterable, and even a *Country Divine* may gather from the Rubric, that Ceremonies are ſuch Indifferent Things. 'Tis an acknowledg'd Truth, and will be ſo, though you prov'd it in ſix pages more: Wherefore if you pleaſe we'll take it for granted, and go on to the main Point, which is, making Alterations at this time: Of this you give us your Senſe in divers Places; I wiſh you would pleaſe to reconcile 'em. For our Weſtern Underſtandings
p. 20. cannot ſo readily comprehend, how *the Reaſon of a*
p. 2. *thing ſhews the Neceſſity*, though there be no *Neceſſity*
p. 6. *in the Things themſelves*, ſo that *good and wiſe Men may differ* upon the Point, but no man can oppoſe
p. 2. it, that has *cool and ſober thoughts*. Make but theſe Paſſages conſiſt, and you ſhall have my Vote to be Chairman in the next Committee of Union. But ſince you allow ſo graciouſly that Good and Wiſe Men may differ, pray why ſo hard upon the Good Men, that are not of the Wiſe Mens Opinion? Muſt we needs be kick'd out of Church, if we like the Eſtabliſh'd Liturgy? and away to
p. 2. *Bedlam for cool and ſober thoughts*? Is there no uſe of our Pews but to ſit in at the Sacrament? ſure *the ho-*

nor

nor of God would diſpenſe with Kneeling; nor is the *Peace and Intereſt of the Kingdom* ſo concern'd in theſe Alterations, but a Man may ſtill uſe the Croſs in Baptiſm, without being ſworn to the Peace; and carry a Knife about him, though he ſhould beſpeak two Godfathers. p. 1.

It were to be wiſh'd too, that the Wiſe Men would a little adjuſt their Notions for the benefit of us Country-men, who are now perplex'd with their different Sentiments, as bad as Judge *A*— was, when the Lawyer ſpake for the Defendant. One with great Depth and Gravity informs us, that *the Nature of the Things themſelves requires an Alteration.* Another with as much form aſſures us that the times exact it, and in caſe we demur upon the Point, *the Nation will abhor us, and the Parliament reduce us to the State of* Scotland. You muſt imagine this puts us in a terrible Fright, for the Man s as confident as if he were a *Member*, and a *Scot* too. But to comfort our Hearts down comes *Tertius è Cælo*, (like *Tumbler* into the Iſle of Pines) not altogether ſo wiſe, but much the merrieſt of the three; and he crys, No ſuch matter, good People, *the Nature of the things require no Alteration*; *all your fear is ridiculous*; and therefore, Old Gentleman, lay down your Spit and your Firefork, and let you 1ſt. Letter. 2d. Letter. p. 11. p. 2.

and I exchange a ſcrap of Latin, and break a Jeſt or two upon this great Occaſion.

p. 7. *You Wiſe Men of the Weſt, think it reaſonable the End ſhould be conſider'd before the Means are reſolv'd upon; which is very Sage and Grave, and becoming your Country Wiſdom, which does nothing in vain; never brews Ale without ſome body to drink it, and never ſets a Hen but to breed Chickens, according to that Logical Axiom which you han't quite forgot, Finis primum in intellectu.* True Sir, and if Writers, as well as Brewers, would but conſider that Axiom, Oh Heavens! what Ale and Pamphlets ſhould we have! But you forget, Sir, one main point of Country Wiſdom, which is this, That we never make Pies without Paper to put under 'em; and therefore your Book coming ſo very opportunely, my Maid went cheerfully to Baking. As for Brewing, you ſay well, that we always do it in hopes ſome honeſt Man may be the better for't; for do you think, I'd have brew'd laſt *March*, had I thought the Diſſenters were to drink it this *February*? The drink would never have work'd, Man. But how come you to be ſo knowing in our Country Buſineſs? *Tu regere imperio*, as the Poet has it; Do you mind Beef, and *Whitechappel*, and ſet up your Pillars at thoſe Bars: You may keep a few Hens (inſtead of Fathers) in your Cockloft, to learn how

how to reckon your Chickens; but as ever you hope to have a Dignity, not a word of Ale or Union.

You ſee, Sir, how forward we Country People are to get into the City faſhion. You give us the Laws of Writing, and your Example muſt be our Apology, if we endeavor to trace your ſteps. We do it, as becomes us, with a *Longe ſequere* — preſerving the due diſtance between a poor Country Vicar, and one *that drinks Sack in the Veſtry*. But we had rather you'd forbear ſetting us theſe Copies, becauſe they take us too much off from our Country Buſineſs: we ſhould brew better Ale, if you minded your Cuſtard; and our Hens would lay, though you did not cackle: Therefore pray Sir, for the future keep your *witty Notions of Cookery* to your ſelf, and leave us to our old Service, and brown Apple-Pie, which we can feed upon very contentedly, at leaſt till the Convocation finds us better Victuals. p. 35. p. 19. 35.

It is a great Condeſcenſion in you after all your ſharpneſs, to ſubmit to that Country Method you have railled, though at laſt you graciouſly do it, and conſider both the End and Means. Your End, it ſeems, is bringing in Diſſenters, and your Means, Abatements and Alterations, and for theſe you give us two notable Reaſons; 1. That the Church may be clean. 2. That Religion may be trim. That the Church may be

clean,

clean, 'tis plain; for you mean not to cleanſe a-
way *The Pillars*; but only to *take down the old Eſ-*
p. 10. *cocheon*, and *ſweep away a few old Cobwebs, whi-*
ten the Walls, and ſet up a new Gallery. Now I
want ſome body to ſcour theſe dirty Similitudes,
for otherwiſe 'tis very hard to decipher 'em. I
hope you don't mean the Kings Arms by your
Eſcocheon, but ſome old Barons that has *Nolu-*
mus mutare leges Angliæ for the Motto. And ſup-
poſe we take down this Eſcocheon, will you ſe-
cure us againſt the Court of Honor? or will any
man elſe ſecure us that you won't take down the
Commandments too? Theſe things ought to be
conſider'd the rather, becauſe, your Cobwebs ſeem
to glance at the Lawn Sleeves, and I wou'd not
have them turn'd into Scotch-Cloath; but for a
new Gallery, I am ready to pay my Proportion as
ſoon as 'tis agreed how to place it to account.

p. 12. We are under the ſame Apprehenſions from
your ſecond Argument, notwithſtanding your
courteous Declaration, that you *are not ſo ſilly as*
to think Religion is in a Conſumption, nor intend to
give her Aſſes Milk, (no pray don't) *nor would you*
have her ſuch a Madwoman as to think you will cut off
her Head, when you only deſign to ſhave her Beard; and
therefore let her ſubmit her Face to a ſpeedy Reformation.
I perceive you obſerve *Decorum*, Sir, and conclude
this may paſs with Chriſtians, knowing that an
Old

Old Teſtament *Jew* would ſooner loſe his Head than marr the corner of his Beard. But that grave Ceremony being long ſince antiquated, you preſume Religion may now ſend for a Barber; with all my heart, Sir, provided it be not *Hanun*, who, when he has half ſhav'd her will cut off her Garments too, and ſhow her Buttocks, and then ſhe may be ſent to *Jericho*. But pray, good merry Gentleman, after all this Gayety, return to your cool and ſober Thoughts, and conſider how decently you beſtow that Wit of yours upon matters of Religion: methinks a Miniſter ſhould have a more awful Idea of the Church, ſome greater Reſpect for the Good and Wiſe Men that differ from him, ſome higher regard to his own Coat and Function, than to make the Buſineſs of a Convocation the Subject of his Raillery. Religion would indeed make *but a very odd Figure*, if all Men painted it at this rate; the Nation might juſtly *abhor* both it and them, and the Lay-men be as forward as ever a Church-man of you all, not only to alter, but aboliſh it. Pray, Sir, conſider this a little, and govern your Spleen; there are other Subjects enough to paſs away *your Times of Merriment*; and your Cap would become you much better, if it were not for your Habit.

Lev. ix 27.

2 Sam. x. 4.

p. 10.

p. 20.

And now, Sir, if you will pardon this Digreſſion, we'll have done with your Means, and

imagine

imagine a ſhort Dialogue between us concerning your End; to ſee what Benefits we may hope for when the Church is ſwept, and ſo forth.

Sir, when the Church is ſwept, and ſo forth, the Diſſenters (who you know are a nice People, and affect an extraordinary Cleanlineſs in Religion) will come in like the ſeven Spirits in the Goſpel. They would have come in before but they
p. 10. wanted a *Gallery*, and ſome *odd inſignificant Figures* ſtar'd 'em full in the face, and frighted them; but now that the Church *Walls* are *whited*, welcome Gentlemen.

I profeſs, Sir, I could never have imagin'd there would have come ſo many though; why here's ſuch a Multitude, one Church will never hold 'em: we muſt e'en ſubdivide, eſpecially ſome of the greater Pariſhes.

Hold you there, Sir, it is not come to that yet. What, We divide that are for Union? You ſhall ſee I'll make room enough in my Church preſent-
p. 12. ly: Avaunt *Anabaptiſts*; Take away the *Eraſtians*,
p. 13. I'll have none of thoſe *Quakers*. Look, Sir, here's
p. 14. a Flock of *wild Diſſenters that can never be folded.*

Nay then we may e'en pull down the Gallery.

Verily and ſo we might, if it were not for ſome *gleanings of the Toleration*, who are for a *National Church*. They are but a few, Sir, and you ſee they are *very grave*: Pray let the Gallery ſtand,

'tis

'tis only for those few; as for the *stiff and peevish Dissenters*, Independents, and the rest of those *inflexible, unchristian* Fanaticks; if they set but one Foot in my Church-yard, I'll ring the Bells backwards.

Pray, Sir, How many do you think your *Grave ones* are?

About as many as the Alterations; for we poll'd 'em first, and quarrel'd with the Service accordingly. p. 9.

Did these Gentlemen ever apply to the Convocation?

No. *And if they should, I hope they know 'em better than to trust 'em.* p. 9. p. 2. p. 6.

Then, methinks, it is a hopeless Project to Unite with them we cannot trust.

Oh Lord! Why that's the very Reason of our Project. They have told us downright, that they won't be satisfied with any Alterations we can make; and do you think we would alter if we durst trust 'em? p. 2.

Explain your self, I beseech you.

Why we know 'em for a parcel of Lying Knaves, that can never keep their Word; and therefore having caught 'em at declaring they won't come in, we are as sure of 'em as if we had 'em in the Gallery.

And when you have theſe Gentlemen, what do you intend to do with 'em?

Do with 'em? there's a Queſtion! Preſent 'em to depriv'd Mens Livings; make 'em *Convocation-Men to affront the Biſhops, ſtrengthen, enlarge, and beautifie the beſt Church in the World with 'em.* Theſe Fellows are fit for any thing.

p. 15. p. 30.

Much-good-do-ye, Sir, with your new Acquaintance. And ſo much for imaginary Dialogue.

To return to my Letter; You ſeem to have forgot one main thing when you altered your Church, and that was, to make up your Chancel Door; for it may ſo happen, that more Conformiſts may go out at that, than *grave Diſſenters* will come in at the other: ſeveral honeſt Gentlemen have told us ſo, and we know 'em ſo well that we dare truſt 'em; eſpecially ſince your Book is on their ſide: for when the Alterations take place, then they are the Diſſenters, and all your Arguments are on their ſide, and your Reaſons for *altering* will plead as ſtrongly for *reſtoring* what has been altered. So that here's the Old Judge again; and I ſee no way to get out of this Perplexity, but only the quiet Enjoyment of the Liturgy we have, and renouncing all Propoſals of changing for the ſake of Diſſenters.

There are other Arguments that carry a fairer Appearance; as firſt, the Biſhops Promiſe. This

the

the Parliament has effectually fulfill'd: a Toleration was the utmoſt the Diſſenters aim'd at: if you don't like that Favour, pray give it us again. But you add, *There was a ſolemn Proteſtation*, viz. *a tacit Agreement among all thinking and ſober Men* to do ſo and ſo. Sure this was ſome *Chriſtmas* Evening, when the Gentlemen were got to ſtill Muſick, and therefore they *proteſted ſilently*, becauſe any Man that ſpoke was to be ſmutted. Pray, Sir, did this Silence invade your Ears at a diſtance? or were you of the Company? Durſt they play with ſo merry a Gentleman, when there was ſuch a Penalty upon Laughing? The Propoſal you tell us of, would have ſent the Cork quite round the Company: for what can be more extravagant, than for ſober and thinking Men to reſolve and proteſt ſo ſolemnly, That if ever their Church 'ſcap'd the Papiſts, they would be ſure to give it up to the Fanaticks. I ſuppoſe, Your *Head has as much room in it as the Weſtern Gentleman's*, and ſome to ſpare; and undoubtedly there was the Meeting when this tacit Agreement was reſolv'd upon. Could not you leave it a tacit one, as they made it? They'll remove their Club to another Houſe if they know you blab thus; or it may be they'll diſperſe, and then how ſhall we rally 'em to make good their Bargain and Sale? You muſt lie down again and think, and put up

p. 28.

p. 4.

a Bill upon your Forehead to give notice that your Head's ready, and there is not ſo fit a Place in *England* for 'em to meet in: but if they ſhould not come, becauſe the Room's unfurniſh'd, don't you grow angry with the whole Church, and
p. 29. fret and fume, and cry, *Tricks, Cheats, no Body will truſt 'em more.* It would better become your Character to fawn upon 'em, if you thought them ſo like your Diſſenters.

p. 24. Another Argument is, The King will reſent our Refuſal. I believe this Secret was reveal'd to you in a ſecond Fit of Thinking; for I don't remember your Name in the Liſt of the Privy Council, and ſo there's hopes you may ſpeak without Commiſſion. To be plain with you, you altering comprehending Sons of *Levi* take too much upon you, making bold with the King's Name upon every Occaſion, and pretending ſuch an intimate Acquaintance with things ſo far out of your reach. You make the King but a ſcurvy Complement, when you trump up that Argument for him which ſounded ſo harſh in the late Reign. The reſt of the Clergy have more juſt and honorable Thoughts of him: they rely upon his Word, and after ſo many repeated Aſſurances of his Gracious Inclinations towards them, cannot queſtion but the Church ſhall continue ſafe and quiet under his Protection, and happy in his Favor.

You

You may chance to be as much deceiv'd in your Opinion of the Parliament, ſince the better part of the Members are as averſe to Alterations as we are. Except in your Book, I never heard that they ſet the Convocation about that Work; but in Sixty One they made an Act to eſtabliſh the Liturgy as it is, and that we deſire to ſtick to, at leaſt till they alter their Mind. Give us leave, Sir, to ſtay their time; and when they ſignifie their Pleaſure, we ſhall know our Duty without conteſting who are *fitteſt Judges of Expedience.* You need not doubt it, Sir, you have ſecur'd the Point, by aſſuring us that otherwiſe the Parliament will turn the *Convocation* into *Surgeons-Hall*; and then what a Figure our Church will make? For if we won't leave out the *Apocrypha*, there is no remedy but the *Houſe* muſt reſolve into a *College of Phyſicians*, and ſend for *Surgeons* to cut up *Tobit*'s Dog immediately. Shan't they be Barber-Surgeons, Sir? for then they may ſhave Religion too? Well 'tis a heavy Doom this: Pray Mr. *T--m* ſtay a little; the Gentleman may come to ſome Temper with the Dog; for he looks as if he might be perſuaded to come over a Stick for the King.

p. 24.

p. 24.

I profeſs, Sir, I am mightily taken with this turning the Clergy into Surgeons, 'tis ſo proper a Metamorphoſis for the Miniſters of a *Perſecuting Church.*

p. 32.

Church. Now let 'em cut, and lance, and cup, and ſcarifie tender Conſciences without mercy, as long as 'tis in their Vocation, but it did not ſo well become 'em when they had their Caſſocks on. And pray, Sir, tell me, were they all tranſ-
p. 5. form'd into Surgeons? No, no, a *double majority* — why thoſe were *the Longitudinarians*; Ay, ſo they were, and therefore were turn'd into little
p. 23. ſhort *Puppets* of about an Inch; and a *huge diſcontented Lay-man* got a Licence from the Maſter of the Revels to ſhow 'em in *Smithfield*, and he ſhow'd 'em and danc'd 'em to the *Tune of Chriſt-*
p. 2. *Church Bells*, and you would not imagine what a deal of Cuſtom he had, yet he did it ſo clumſily,
p. 23. that I ſaw him *draw the Wires.*

'Tis well you were there, Sir, that the Show might be ſure of a *Merry Andrew*: For (to change the Scene) that's a Character becomes you ſo very well, that you ought to ſtick to it. Though the diſcontented Layman ſhould recover his Place at Court, yet don't you petition for a Place under him, for of all things, Courtſhip is the moſt contrary to your Genius. Trade on in meek Satyr, which does not beſpatter half ſo much as your general fulſom Commendations. It is more credit to the Prolocutor to be quite ſhut out of your good Graces, than either of thoſe great and excellent Perſons whom you fawn upon, get by being
p. 9. 34. ſo clumſily careſs'd.

If

If Mr. *L*—'s Beard offend you, lie ſtill, and he ſhall ſhave twice a Week: We'll ſend him the Barber, as ſoon as he has done with Religion: And when his hand's in ſhall he ſhave *Athanaſius* too? I would fain have him ſtand well in your Opinion. *Quicunque vult!* That ſhews he was not for impoſing. An honeſt civil well-meaning Gentleman, he might want a few *cool and ſober Thoughts*, when he writ his Creed; but ſure he was not ſo damnable *drunk*, as *T. F*— ſays.

Sir, I thank you for your Coat and Badge; in return I have ſent you a ſhort Presbyterian Cloak, particolor'd, with Aſſent and Conſent in the Red, and Abatements and Alterations in the Yellow. You have a Cap already; to make you complete, my Hen has juſt laid, and I have ſent you an Egg; and ſo I thank you for your Letter, which the oftner I read, the fuller it convinces me of what you inſinuate (*p.* 14.) that 'tis always the ſoft ſide of a Man's Head which inclines him to unite with the Diſſenters.

I am, Sir,

&c.

Remember me kindly to your Dull Second, and tell him he has the ſafeſt way of writing of any man I have met with.

FINIS.